

EXHIBIT 2

She was raped at a Utah State University fraternity. Now the school will pay her \$250K and she'll help improve its response to campus sexual assault.



(Trent Nelson | The Salt Lake Tribune) Victoria Hewlett recently settled a rape case against Utah State University. Hewlett was photographed in Salt Lake City, Thursday July 5, 2018.

By Courtney Tanner | July 5, 2018, 12:52 p.m. | Updated: 6:13 p.m.



Comment

A former Utah State University student who was raped at a fraternity house has agreed to a \$250,000 settlement that will also require the school to increase its oversight of its Greek system.

The agreement announced Thursday for now marks the end of one of several high-profile sexual assault and harassment cases at the northern Utah school, which has been criticized for how it has handled allegations.

“It was definitely a huge healing moment for me to know that they finally heard me and wanted to do the right thing,” said Victoria Hewlett, 22.



Hewlett [filed suit against the university](#) after she was raped in July 2015 by then-Sigma Chi fraternity member Jason Relopez. The lawsuit claimed that [five other women had reported to the school](#) that Relopez sexually assaulted them before Hewlett’s attack and before administrators did much to act on that knowledge. The school said Relopez had been on its “radar” but [denied receiving five previous assault reports](#).

Relopez remained on campus until his arrest after the attack on Hewlett, who was 19 at the time. He was then suspended from the university and later pleaded guilty to attempted rape and forcible sexual abuse, admitting that he sexually assaulted two women in two years. He was sentenced to a year in jail.



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The Salt Lake Tribune generally does not identify victims of sexual abuse, but Hewlett has agreed to the use of her name.

The quarter-million-dollar settlement, which effectively ends the lawsuit against the university, included [an opinion column published by The Salt Lake Tribune](#) on Thursday, written by Hewlett and USU President Noelle E. Cockett.

It said Hewlett will join other survivors, experts and advocates on a new advisory committee that will give feedback to USU. (It has not yet been launched.)

“Nothing can wipe away the pain and trauma that survivors of sexual violence endure and live with every day,” the opinion column reads. “But working through that trauma together can lead to reforms that prevent such painful history from repeating itself over and over again.”

The column outlines a series of new policies that the university must put in place over the next year as part of the agreement. Chiefly, that includes requiring USU fraternities and sororities, which are private entities franchised by national organizations, to apply for recognition as official student organizations. That will allow the school to directly monitor them and hold them to standards of conduct — which it claimed not to have the authority to do before.



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Hewlett’s attorney, Jeffrey Eisenberg, believes that was the “gap in the system.” Before, there was no oversight of drinking or partying at Utah State’s Greek chapter houses, he said, and there was no enforcement of the rules.

The changes, he said, “are a very, very good start.”

USU spokesman Tim Vitale said, “All along we recognized we had work to do. We were pleased we were able to sit down with Victoria and hear her perspective.”

The university will now appoint a full-time coordinator to oversee fraternity and sorority activities. That person will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the law, doing routine checks of members and houses, and conducting mandatory annual sexual assault prevention training for all students in the Greek system. He or she additionally should “make sure those who feel unsafe or mistreated at those houses have a way to report abuse and violence,” according to the settlement, signed June 29.

Each house, too, must submit a review every semester identifying any reports or allegations of misconduct or alcohol-related infractions. And each chapter will be subject to random inspections.



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“I don’t think the university had a full understanding of the seriousness of the issues happening at the fraternity houses due to no one regulating it,” Hewlett said. “I feel really happy and hopeful with the changes that the university has agreed to make.”

Campuswide, USU also has agreed to provide annual training to employees who are likely to receive reports of sexual assaults, as well as to all students who participate in athletic activities. Any student attending the university must also, at some point, complete the prevention exercise — which incoming freshmen participate in but some upperclassmen may have missed.

The school will continue providing — and increase advertising for — an advocate for students who report a sexual assault. The advocate helps students navigate the process, assistance Hewlett said she wasn't aware was available. University officials, she said, never offered her support services as required by federal law.

She hopes the new policies and revisions will make it easier for other sexual assault victims to come forward.

"I feel like today is a very good day, and it's definitely a piece to the puzzle," Hewlett said, "but we still have more we need to accomplish."

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She will continue to pursue her legal claims against the national Sigma Chi fraternity and its USU house, which have denied wrongdoing.

"We believe that they have the most responsibility," Eisenberg added. "They certainly needed to do more."

At least four USU students have been charged or convicted in sexual assault cases alleged to have occurred since 2013. That includes a 2015 complaint against Ryan Wray, then-president of Pi Kappa Alpha, which is around the corner from Sigma Chi in Logan. Wray pleaded guilty to attempted forcible sex abuse and [was sentenced to six months](#) in jail.

Multiple sexual assault allegations [were made in 2015](#) against former Utah State University linebacker Torrey Green, who has since been charged with 12 felonies [in seven attacks from 2013 to 2015](#). [A trial date has not been set](#).

And this year, the school [removed the coordinator over its Title IX office](#), which handles complaints of assault and discrimination. The decision was announced weeks after investigators found that school administrators had done little to address a "pervasive culture of sexism" and multiple assault allegations against faculty in the piano department.

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The settlement between Hewlett and the school comes as the U.S. Department of Justice investigates the school's response to campus sexual assault in [a federal review announced last year](#).

Though she left USU before finishing a degree, Hewlett said she is glad to see a shift in the climate there. She graduated this week from the National Institute of Medical Aesthetics in South Jordan. After finishing a few more hours of work, she will have her esthetician license to work in cosmetics at clinics or spas.

"It hasn't been easy," she said. "It's taken a long time to get to where we are now. But I'm very happy with the result."



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